

## Staiger, Kimberly

---

**From:** Staiger, Kimberly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 31, 2018 2:48 PM  
**To:** Vaouli, Elena; Escobar, Leah  
**Subject:** FW: RPL 18590 (Northport Middle School Concerns)

Sorry!! Forgot to copy you guys on this!!

---

**From:** Staiger, Kimberly  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 31, 2018 2:45 PM  
**To:** 'taramackey16@gmail.com' <taramackey16@gmail.com>  
**Cc:** 'Hughes, Michael J (HEALTH)' <michael.hughes@health.ny.gov>; Zachos, George (Zachos.George@epa.gov) <Zachos.George@epa.gov>; Mark Maddaloni <Maddaloni.Mark@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** RPL 18590 (Northport Middle School Concerns)

Hello Tara,

Thank you for contacting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to report your concerns about the Northport Middle School located in Northport, NY. Your email below was forwarded to this office for response:

*Tip or Complaint: There are many parents in our community that are concerned with the health and safety of our children and teachers in the Northport Middle School. There is a long, well documented history of serious environmental hazards in and around the building. Northport Middle School (formerly known as Middleville School). 11 Middleville Road, Northport, NY 11768 Superintendent: Robert Banzer 631-262-6604 1) A bus depot for the entire school district is attached to this building. There are also diesel fuel tanks on site. It has been asked in school records, for over 20 years, that this depot be relocated for health and safety reasons. Children and teachers have reported complaints regarding bus exhaust for decades. It makes them nauseous, lightheaded and gives them headaches. Many children have recently tested with high levels of carbon monoxide in their blood. (Carboxyhemoglobin) We can provide medical proof of this. 2) Chlordane concern- This pesticide was found in the soil up against several classrooms. It was noted in reports from 1984 and 2001. It was recommended that soil should be removed at a deeper level and then possible cement work may be needed to rectify. We could find no records that this was done. 3) Improperly stored Volatile Organic Compounds- Stored in a warehouse under the "K" wing of this school. There was a spill/leak of some kind on April 24, 2017. Benzenes, Butanone and P&M Xylenes were discovered and elevated levels. Since this occurred, people are coming forward with Leukemia/Aplastic Anemia/ITP. These are all former students of this building. Benzene exposure is known to cause changes to bone marrow which can lead to blood cancers and anemia. 4) This school is built on land that meets up to the land of a former Superfund site, Northport Veterans Administration Medical Center. The district is now excavating land just feet from the classrooms, to install a new track and tennis court.*

It was nice talking to you! As discussed during our phone conversations, below is an emailed response to the concerns you had submitted to EPA:

1.) Diesel exhaust can cause lung damage when inhaled and has been identified as a likely cause of cancer. Please note that under New York State law, heavy duty trucks and buses may not idle for more than five consecutive minutes with a few exceptions. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) enforces the state idling law. If the buses are idling for longer than the allowable five minutes, you can contact NYSDEC at (800) TIPP-DEC or at <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/> to report violations of the state idling law. You may also report violations to the New York State Attorney General's Office at (800) 771-7755 or at [www.ag.ny.gov](http://www.ag.ny.gov).

Please note that the New York State Education Department (NYSED) has more stringent regulations regarding idling buses than the New York State law referenced above. You can find information on the NYSED idling restrictions at [http://www.p12.nysed.gov/schoolbus/anti-idling/htm/Anti\\_Idling\\_156.3.htm](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/schoolbus/anti-idling/htm/Anti_Idling_156.3.htm).

EPA has established the National Clean Diesel Campaign (NCDC) to protect public health and air quality by addressing diesel emissions. NCDC promotes clean air strategies by working with manufacturers, fleet operators, air quality professionals, environmental and community organizations and state and local officials to reduce diesel emissions. The Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA), codified at 42 U.S.C. 16131 *et seq.*, authorizes EPA to offer funding assistance to eligible entities on a competitive basis. Specific information on funded projects can be found at:

[www.epa.gov/cleandiesel/clean-diesel-national-grants](http://www.epa.gov/cleandiesel/clean-diesel-national-grants). If school officials and parents in your district are interested in learning more about funding that may be available under EPA's NCDC, you can send an email to [cleandiesel@epa.gov](mailto:cleandiesel@epa.gov).

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) has been providing oversight to school officials for air monitoring at the school to identify potential hazards. Any questions or health concerns about the indoor air quality at the school from the diesel emissions or the Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) or should be addressed to Michael Hughes at NYSDOH. He can be reached at (518) 402-7800.

2.) The chlordane in soils was reported in an environmental report drafted by a contractor hired by the school district. According to a letter addressed to parents dated December 15, 2000, a consultant collected eight soil samples outside the school building. Six of the samples were negative for chlordane and two had trace levels (levels were not provided in the letter).

I contacted Mr. Robert Banzer, the Interim Superintendent of Buildings at the Northport Middle School and spoke with him about the chlordane sampling conducted in 2000. He stated that he would look to see if the report has been archived. I'll reach out to you with more information when I hear back from Mr. Banzer.

3.) State and local health departments provide the first level of response to concerns about community cancer rates. These agencies, along with the state cancer registry, collect and analyze local-level data and calculate expected and actual cancer rates. We understand you have already been in contact with the state health department about this concern. To speak with someone from NYSDOH about cancer concerns, please call (518) 402-7950.

Additional information can also be found at the following website:

[https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/cancer/environmental\\_facilities/mapping/about/concerned\\_about\\_cancer\\_in\\_your\\_community.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/cancer/environmental_facilities/mapping/about/concerned_about_cancer_in_your_community.htm).

4.) Superfund or the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), as amended, is a federal law designed to clean up sites contaminated with hazardous substances and pollutants. CERCLA, also informally known as Superfund, allows EPA to clean up contaminated sites and forces parties responsible for contamination to either perform cleanups or to reimburse the government for EPA-led cleanup work. To learn more about EPA's Superfund program, you can visit <https://www.epa.gov/superfund>.

In the federal Superfund program, "screening" refers to the process of identifying and defining areas, contaminants and conditions at a particular site that may be of potential concern or that do not require further federal attention. Generally, at sites where contaminant concentrations fall below screening levels, no further action or study is warranted under the federal Superfund program.

In 2014, a Preliminary Assessment (PA) was performed at the Northport Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) by a contractor retained by the Department of Veteran's Affairs to determine if the site was eligible for placement onto the National Priorities List (NPL). The primary focus of the PA was to identify, evaluate, and assess historical and current site operations as it relates to four exposure pathways of concern: soil, ground water, surface water and air.

Information pertaining to most of the exposure pathways is limited, as no sampling of on-site soils, surface water, or air has occurred. To evaluate the site, it was assumed that ash did remain on-site from the historic incinerator, and it did have the potential to impact receptors. Infiltration into groundwater, overland leachate and dust particle runoff, subsurface soil contamination, and airborne dust particulates were all assumed to be possible. Based upon the Hazard

Ranking System (HRS) score in the PA, the site is not eligible for placement onto the NPL. The NPL is a published list of hazardous waste sites in the country that are eligible for federal funding to pay for extensive, long-term cleanup actions under the Superfund remedial program. I'm attaching a copy of the PA for your records, along with information on EPA's review of the report.

If you have any questions or need additional assistance, please give me a call at (732) 452-6415.

Thank you,  
Kim

Kimberly Staiger  
EPA Region 2  
2890 Woodbridge Avenue  
Edison, NJ 08837